

**STATE WAIVER REQUEST**  
Certification Periods

1. **Waiver Serial Number (if applicable):**
2. **Type of request:** Initial
3. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.10(f)(5)
4. **State:** Rhode Island
5. **Region:** Northeast
6. **Regulatory requirements:** *Lengthening certification periods.* State agencies may lengthen a household's current recertification period once it is established as long as the total months of the certification period do not exceed 24 months for households in which all adult members are elderly or disabled, or 12 months for other households. If the State agency extends a household's certification period, it must advise the household of the new certification ending date with a notice containing the same information as the notice of eligibility set forth in paragraph (g)(1)(i)(A) of this section.
7. **Proposed alternative procedures:** For the October 2018 recertifications, the Rhode Island Department of Human Services (RI DHS) proposes to add an additional two (2) months to the certification period for approximately 2,500 regular Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) households in the State.
8. **Justification for request:** Due to a mailing issue, approximately 3,000 SNAP households whose certification period end date is October 31, 2018, were not mailed a recertification packet (DHS-1010) on or about September 1, 2018 and 2,500 did not ultimately recertify. As such, these households were not afforded an opportunity to recertify for SNAP. With this waiver, households with recertifications due October 2018, which were not mailed a recertification packet, will have their certification period extended by two (2) months to December 31, 2018. This extension of the certification period, will allow the state to mail the recertification packets including Notices of Expiration to the households by November 14, 2018 and allow these households at least forty-five (45) days to return the recertifications back to the State for processing. RI DHS will commit to providing additional resources for the local offices to process the additional recertifications which will now be due December 2018. This waiver will allow households to receive benefits without a break in services due to the State's error and will eliminate the requirement for clients to reapply for benefits after their certification period has ended.

Additional safeguards and validation processes are being put in place to ensure that notices are timely mailed in the future. Processes will be put in place to validate the number of each type of notices being generated and sent to the mail room, and then verified as being mailed. The State will monitor this validation process each month to identify and resolve any issues with the mailing processes before it impacts our customers.

- 9. Caseload information, including percent of caseload and description of population expected to be affected by this waiver:** There were a total of 6,243 recertifications due October 2018. Of this total population, approximately 3,000 of these households were not mailed the recertification packet and approximately 2,500 did not ultimately recertify.

- 10. Anticipated impact on households and State agency operations:** This waiver would enable households who were not given an opportunity to recertify for SNAP to maintain participation in SNAP at their current benefit level and not experience any hardship due to the delayed recertification of benefits.

RI DHS is committed to providing the additional staff and overtime hours necessary in the local offices to ensure timely processing of returned recertification packets for those households who had their certification periods extended from October to December, and those who were already due for recertification in December 2018.

- 11. Anticipated implementation date and time period for which waiver is needed (please indicate if the waiver approval is needed to make system adjustments):** This waiver will be implemented immediately upon approval and will affect certification periods for October 2018 for households who were not mailed recertification packet (DHS-1010).

- 12. Proposed quality control review procedures:** No special Quality Control (QC) procedures are required for cases subject to the provisions of this waiver. Cases to which this waiver will be applied will be subject to the same standard QC procedures as all other SNAP cases pursuant to the FNS Handbook 310.

- 13. Name, title, and email of requesting official:**

**Name:** Iwona Ramian

**Title:** SNAP Administrator

**Email:** Iwona.Ramian@dhs.ri.gov

- 14. Date of request:** October 29, 2018

- 15. State agency staff contact:**

**Name:** Iwona Ramian

**Title:** SNAP Administrator

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**16. Regional Office contact person (*to be completed by FNS regional office*):**